

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Dpt Sociale en Culturele Antropologie

*Guest Lecture (Migration and minority policies)*

*Leuven, 15 oktober 2008*

***In the aftermath of « Barça mba barzakh » :***  
**(re)conceptualizing migration factors**  
**among Senegalese urban youth**

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*« 102 “Fools of the sea” die,  
25 fished out of the water »*

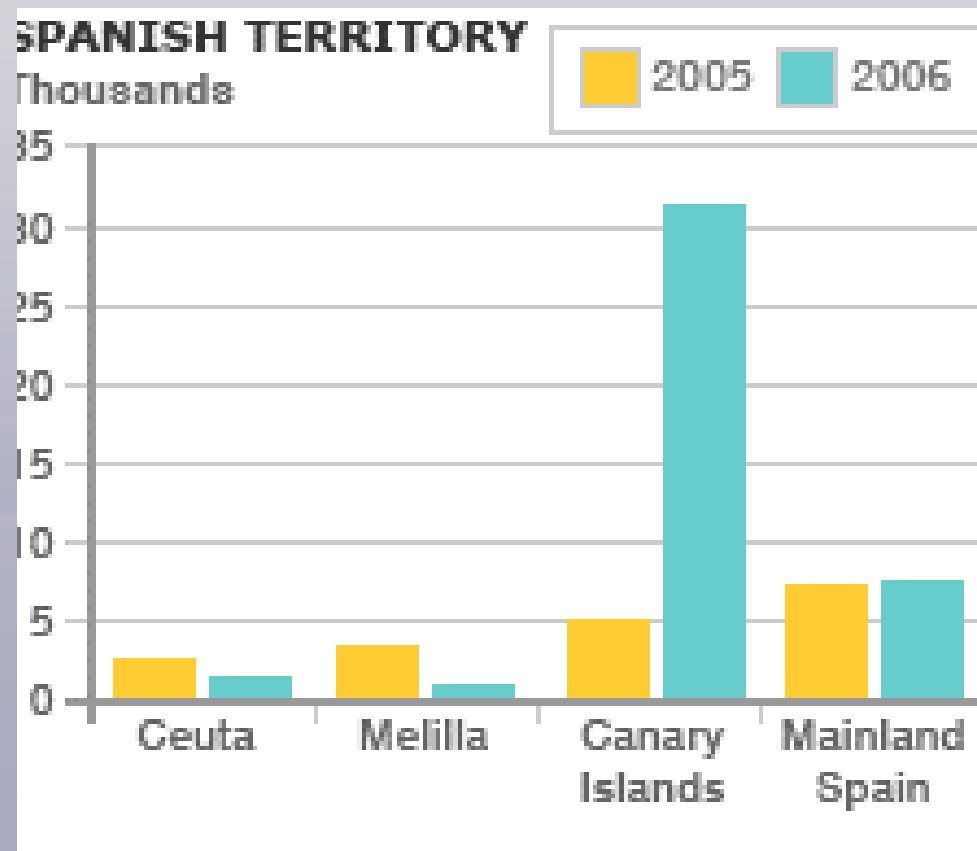
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*« After 13 days of wandering in the high sea, a pirogue which sailed out of Ziguinchor filled to the brim with clandestine emigrants (127 in total) destined for the Canary Islands, was shipwrecked*

*...*

*25 of the passengers of this fortune seeking pirogue were fished out of the water on Saturday by local fishermen, but all the other 102 emigration candidates were declared missing, if not to say died in the high seas. »*

In 2006, more than 33.000 clandestine migrants arrive in the Canary Islands, over 7 times as many as in 2005



Source : [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com)



# « Barça mba Barzakh »



Source photos: [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com)

# Presentation Outline

## Historical context

1. Senegal: traditionally an immigration country
2. From immigration to emigration
3. The emergence of a migration culture

## Events of 2006

1. The Canary Islands experience
2. The inglorious return to Senegal
3. Countering clandestine migration?

## Update 2008

1. Arrivals and Interceptions
2. The persistence of migrant culture
3. Migrants as Role Models

## Introducing Cultural Dissonance

1. “Old” versus “New”
2. Re-conceptualizing factors for out-migration ?

# Senegal: an immigration country

## Pre-colonial era :

- Marked by large scale migrations resulting from trade, warfare, pastoralism, slaving, natural disasters or religious conquest

## During colonization :

- Regional migration flows towards centres of mineral, oil and industrial production mostly in Ivory Coast, Ghana and Senegal
- Intraregional migration flows within the Senegambian region

## After independence :

- Increasing numbers of migration into Senegal because of armed conflicts in neighbouring countries
- However, ration immigrants/population decreases from 4,8 to 2,8% between 1960 and 2005







# From immigration to emigration

## Until 1970s: migration to France

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- A 1st wave of labour migration after WW I
- A 2<sup>nd</sup> migration wave of students between '45 & '70

## Between the 1970s & 1990s

- Labour migration becomes predominant
- 2/3 of migrants to other African countries (e.g., Gabon, Ivory Coast, Zaïre, etc)
- Within Europe increasing migration to mainly Spain & Italy

## From 2000 onwards

- 1 out of 2 migrants prefer going to Europe or USA
- Italy & Spain preferred destinations in Europe (>France)

# From immigration to emigration (2)

## Migrant producing regions in Senegal

- < 1980 : mainly from the rural areas from Senegal River Valley
- > 1990 : 40% originating from Dakar and Touba

## Migrants demographics

- Urban: 52%                      Women: 16%
- Age 15-34: 65%                Unmarried : 46%

## Remittances

- Migrants : 6% of population    →        10% of GNP
- Farmers : 70% of population    →        15% of GNP

# A migrant culture

In Senegal, 34% of persons between 18 and 65 years old intend to migrate (Robin 2000)

« *When you are old enough as a man, you will go abroad.* »  
(NIDI 2001)



- By air : Buying a visa increasingly difficult and expensive (+/- 4.000 €)
- By land : Crossing the Sahara, and Mellila & Ceuta (Strait of Gibraltar) increasingly secured
- By sea: routes in existence since the 80s, first from Morocco, then from Mauritania, since recently from Senegal as well

# The Canary Islands experience

*« Others have taken the same route, they arrived and there working now. They're making good money, they succeeded. It is they who call us and tell us to come. »*

Getting a pirogue ready may take up to 2 to 3 months:

- Finding around 100 clients willing to pay 500 € each
- Purchase of 2 engines, 2 GPS, fuel, ...
- Food provisions (water, rice, oil, sheep) for 10 days
- Consulting the marabouts for blessings and magic potions



Source photo: [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com)



# The Canary Islands experience (2)

*« You know, among the captains you have qualified people and not so qualified people. Some really know how to work with a GPS, but others don't ... That's why you see so many tragedies, people who get lost in the sea, who take fifteen to twenty days, who are tired, seasick, they throw up and then if you don't eat, you die. That's why there are too many dead ... »*



# The inglorious return home



Source photos: [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com)



Between September and December 2006, about 4,600 Senegalese migrants were repatriated to Saint Louis in Senegal, at the request of the Senegalese president, Abdoulaye Wade.

# The inglorious return home (2)

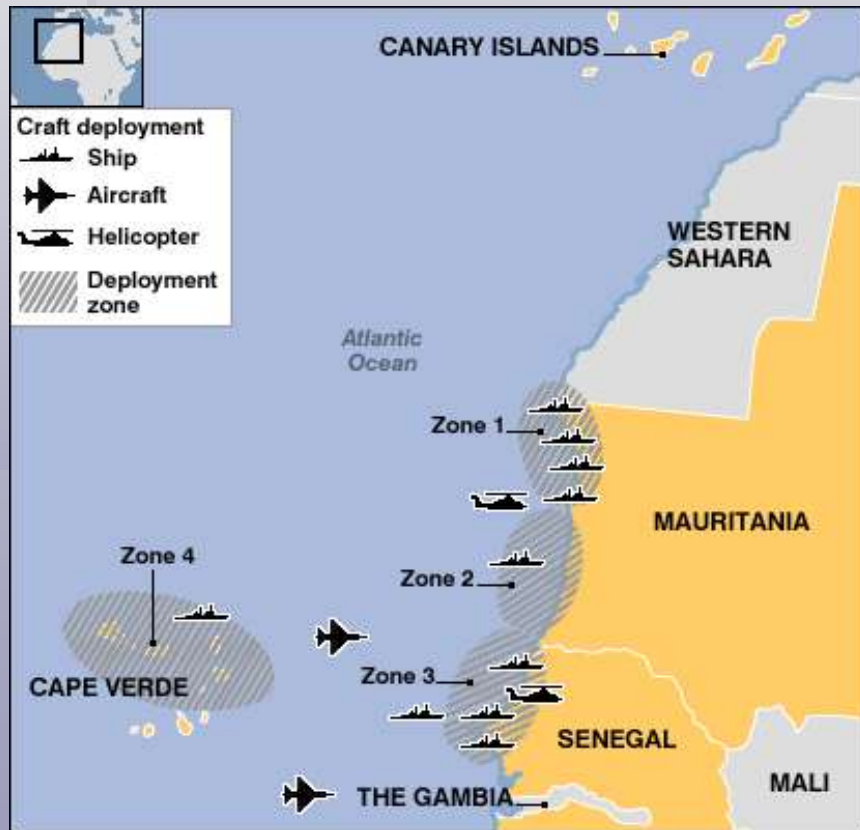


« We arrived in St Louis at midday, it was really very, very hot ... The coming home was hard ... everybody cried. My father said that it was not so bad, that it is a hardship that men go through. But it was my mother who couldn't stop crying, I felt so sorry for her ... With all the efforts I went through to go all the way to Spain, and that all they did was repatriate us ... She was crying out of anger against our government.»



# Countering clandestine migration

## FRONTEX: the EU's institutional watchdog



### HERA I, II & III programmes

- Deploying experts to identify migrants and dismantle trafficking networks
- Increasing technical equipment for patrolling borders of emigration countries
- In 2006, interception of 3 887 clandestine migrants en route to the Canary Islands, barely 1 for every 10 successful arrivals



# Countering clandestine migration (2)

- The REVA plan «Return to Agriculture»
- Grassroots groups together with religious leaders try to dissuade candidate migrants from boarding pirogues (« equals suicide »)
- Films to show that «Europe is not Paradise»
- Issuance of limited number of visas for temporary employment contracts

# Countering clandestine migration (3)

In 2006: 3.000 persons intercepted yet 33.000 arrived safely  
« *The sea is a world* »

Migrants from urban areas & an Agriculture in shambles  
« *The REVA plan stinks* »

Films on migrant life in Europe aim to dissuade candidates  
« *To make money, you also need luck ... And that is God who decides ... Some people left for Europe 10 years ago, and they still have nothing ... But if you have a profession, then perhaps you can make it, you just need some luck. »*

# Update 2008: Arrivals & Interceptions

Arrivals into the Canary Islands by pirogue decreased:

- to 12,000 in 2007 (-/- 60%)
- Further down to 3,200 in first half of 2008 (-/-50%)

Persons intercepted by Frontex increased:

- 40% in 2007 compared to 10% in 2005
- Further up to 60% in 2008

Legal migration has become an alternative option:

- Spain issued 500 visas in 2007 and planned 2,700 for 2008
- France opened up 108 professions previously closed to migration candidates
- Other countries negotiating similar agreements with Senegal

# Persistence of Migrant Culture

*« It doesn't even have to be in Europe, even in another African country you can live better than in your own country ... You can save a little, for example if you make 10,000, you can keep 7,000 and eat only 3,000. But at home you cannot do that ... because your mother is there, your sisters, your brothers-in-law who don't have a job. And we help each other...*



*But if you are in Europe, you get your wages, you take some of it and send it home to your family, there will still be something left because you're not sending all of it »*



# Migrants as Role Models

- Socio-cultural pressure to share resources
- Not sharing may lead to social exclusion & loosing safety net
- Migrant is free to set fixed monthly contribution him/herself.
- Financial freedom without risking of social exclusion

**Break !**

# Cultural Dissonance: the concept

- When an individual perceives a conflict between sets of rules from different cultures
- Often applied in post-migration situations among migrant populations

**A set of individual beliefs and behaviors (pre-migration)  
Is perceived to be inconsistent with  
the individual's cultural context (post-migration)**

# Globalization & Cultural diversity

Local culture no longer “*tacit realm of reproducible practices and dispositions*” (Appadurai 1990: 199)

“... *standard cultural production ... is now an endangered activity ... Lives today are as much acts of projection and imagination as they are acts of known scripts or predictable outcomes.*”

(Appadurai 1991: 205)

# **Social Solidarity** or **Economic Self-reliance**

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- Erosion of the patron-client system
- A gerontocratic ceiling of opportunities
- Growing kleptocracy due to the politization of society
- Marabouts role in democratic elections



# **“Old” versus “New”**

## **Local versus Global**

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- “Old” cultural beliefs and behaviors based on the principle of social solidarity
  - “New” cultural setting (liberalization of economy) introduces principle of economic self-reliance
  - Local environment marred by acute scarcity of resources
- Incompatibility between “old” and “new”

# Cultural dissonance & out-migration

**Expected social behavior (“old”)  
incompatible with  
expected economic behavior (“new”)**

- Stress results from individual's inability to cope with environmental demands
- Out-migration offers opportunity for compromise between “old” and “new” expected behaviors



**Thank you for your attention**